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The Question of Tactics in an Age of Authoritarian Neoliberalism

Nicholas Kiersey and William Sokoloff

The question of tactics in an age of authoritarian neoliberalism was the theme of the February 24–26, 2019, Caucus for a New Political Science (CNPS) conference held at South Padre Island, Texas.[1] The conference site itself, located just miles away from the United States (US) and Mexico border in the Rio Grande Valley, was a contested space. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) set up a recruitment table at the entrance of the conference venue, presumably to entice any passing tourists who might be looking for a new career opportunity. Across from the ICE officials, conference organizers placed the CNPS conference poster on an easel so that participants would know that they were in the right place. Appearing prominently on this poster was an image of the border wall, and another of a banner held by protestors reading "Stop Police Brutality." The ICE officials could not fail to see the poster's words and images. While the officers in no way appeared to acknowledge the poster, its placement and appearance functioned to disrupt the casually-presumed legitimacy of ICE's presence at the conference hotel. While the wider political significance of such a moment should not be exaggerated, it cannot be gainsaid that, for a brief moment, the conference hotel lobby became the scene of a certain *tactical* intervention on the part of the conference organizers, triggering a clash between two very different visions of the possibilities and limits of political life. To what extent do such tactics advance the cause of the Left, and how or to what extent should they be strategically coordinated? These are the questions that frame this Special Issue of *New Political Science*.

Approximately sixty-six political scientists participated in the conference, engaging with various themes pertaining to the question "What is to be done?" in the context of authoritarian neoliberalism. The concept of authoritarian neoliberalism, as Ian Bruff notes, has its roots in debates about the role of capitalist power in pushing authoritarian tendencies within the apparatus of the British state in the late 1970s.[2] Now, as then, in the wake of significant global economic upheaval, capitalism and representative democracy are once again in the throes of a legitimacy crisis. Scholars of capitalist power, and political order, more generally, are debating the extent to which elites working to deploy the capacities of the state in order to "insulate" themselves from "social and political dissent."[3] With this debate explicitly in mind, the conference's Call for Papers included the following statement:

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[1]The guest co-editors thank the readers who conducted blind peer review for this Special Edition, the CNPS 2019 conference co-organizers, William Sokoloff and Clyde W. Barrow, the conference participants at CNPS 2019, and Jocelyn Boryczka for her support of this Special Issue of *New Political Science*.

[2]Ian Bruff, "The Rise of Authoritarian Neoliberalism," *Rethinking Marxism* 26:1 (2014), p. 115.

[3]Ibid.

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> Neoliberals and neoliberalism purport to extend "freedom" to individuals on a global scale, but this freedom extends primarily to transnational corporations and the billionaire class. As business and wealth are deregulated and set free to plunder the planet, ordinary citizens, workers, women, and minority groups are increasingly subject to overt state violence, multiple forms of surveillance, and direct forms of expropriation, such as declining real wages, regressive taxation, eviction, foreclosure, detention, and incarceration. The intensification of surveillance, exploitation, and repression by ostensibly democratic regimes, the increasingly authoritarian rhetoric and actions of world leaders (e.g., Trump, Erdoğan, Duda, Duterte, Rajoy), and the rise of right-wing populism raise political, organizational, and ideological questions elude traditional forms of electoral politics. Consequently, in an age of neoliberal authoritarianism, the question of tactics is again at the forefront of progressive and left political debate.[4]

Before we delve into the question of tactics, permit us first to take a brief moment to examine the wider significance of the authoritarian neoliberalism hypothesis. Critical perspectives on the revolutionary potential of our time range from the optimistic,[5] to the pessimistic,[6] to the altogether more open-ended and uncertain.[7] The arguments of the optimists vary in nature, but one thing that they all appear to have in common is a certain faith in the political potential of collective human action, and the possibilities of a universal program of democratized decision-making over our increasingly technologically-advanced means of production. Aside from their technological optimism, advocates of this position tend also to be intellectually informed by the debates of the Second International, and a commitment to a politics of overcoming capitalism at least partially by means of a parliamentary *strategy*. In the context of the above-mentioned British debates, this position was arguably most famously represented by the sociologist Ralph Miliband. Speaking of the "desubordination" of vast swathes of the population of Western capitalist countries by the post-War economic compact, Miliband believed that the capitalist state was becoming the focus of new social demands, and that the political power of the dominant classes was beginning to fracture. These fractures could be exploited by progressive movements by means of a relatively integrated and "resolute" mass-movement politics, with the achievement of a parliamentary majority at the center of its focus.[8]

The pessimists in this debate, by contrast, are much less sanguine about the liberatory potentials of Late Capitalism.[9] A political project advocating government through the application of market-based principles to an ever-expanding domain of everyday life,

[4]Conference Program for the 2nd Biennial Conference of the Caucus for a New Political Science, available online at: https://connect.apsanet.org/s27/cnps-conference/.

[5]See Paul Mason, *Postcapitalism* (New York, NY: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2016), and Aaron Bastani, *Fully Automated Luxury Communism* (New York, NY: Verso, 2019).

[6]See Nick Srnicek, *Platform Capitalism* (Cambridge, UK Polity, 2017) and Wolfgang Streeck, *How Will Capitalism End?* (New York, NY: Verso Books, 2016).

[7]See Peter Frase, *Four Futures* (New York, NY: Verso Books, 2016).

[8]Leo Panitch, "Ralph Miliband's Masterpiece at 50," *Jacobin* (June 2019), available online at: https://jacobinmag.com/2019/06/ralph-miliband-state-capitalist-society.

[9]See Ian Bruff, "The Rise of Authoritarian Neoliberalism," *Rethinking Marxism*, pp. 113–129; Cemal Burak Tansel (ed.), *States of the Discipline: Authoritarian Neoliberalism and the Contested Reproduction of the Capitalist Order* (New York, NY: Rowman and Littlefield, 2017); Ian Bruff and Cemal Burak Tansel, "Authoritarian Neoliberalism: Trajectories of Knowledge Production and Praxis," *Globalizations* 16:3 (2019), pp. 233–244; and Matthew D. J. Ryan, "Interrogating 'Authoritarian Neoliberalism:' The Problem of Periodization," *Competition & Change* 23:2 (April 2019), pp. 116–137. For engagement with authoritarian neoliberalism, neo-fascism, and related themes, see William E. Connolly, *Aspirational Fascism: The Struggle for Multifaceted Democracy under Trumpism* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2017); Nancy S. Love, *Trendy Fascism: White Power Music and the Future of Democracy* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2016); Alain Badiou, *Trump* (Medford, MA: Polity Press, 2019); Henry A. Giroux, *Neoliberalism's War on Higher Education* (Chicago, IL: Haymarket Books, 2014).

neoliberalism became a prominent ideology in the 1970s, in the wake of a number of disastrous crises which had undermined the reputation of the Keynesian post-war model.[10] Already tacitly authoritarian in its prescriptions, neoliberalism nevertheless enjoyed several decades of relative popularity in the West, and was seen by many as the natural model for equitable and democratic government.[11] With the 2008 financial crisis, however, the project seems to have suffered a precipitous loss of prestige, and elites are now struggling to reestablish its legitimacy. For the pessimists, the electoral successes around the world of anti-democratic leaders such as those listed in the Call for Papers, excerpted above, suggest that capitalist elites may now be giving up on the very idea of refloating the reputation of neoliberalism. Indeed, these elites appear now to be turning to decidedly non-ideological solutions to ensure their purchase on political power.

Pessimists thus worry that the opportunities for electoral strategy are narrowing. A diversity of states around the world, and by no means solely those effected by the 2008 financial crisis, have become relays for austerity, "internalizing the interests of transnational capital at the expense of labor."[12] Addressing the European context, for example, Andreas Bieler and Adam Morton discuss a number of legal mechanisms introduced since the outbreak of the crisis, empowering the institutions of the European Union (EU) to impose fines on countries that do not live up to the standards of the EU's Stability and Growth Pact. Policies such as these are, of course, ratified by national parliaments, ostensibly via democratic means. Once in place, however, they tradeoff significant amounts of economic and political sovereignty. The upshot, Bieler and Morton aver, has been a certain generalization of austerity as a crisis recovery model and, by extension, a general "depoliticization" of economic governance. Echoing Bruff, they suggest that we can now observe a degree of such disempowerment among European labor movements that they are no longer really capable of leveraging the state in pursuit of their demands; institutions of economic decision-making have been relocated to the supranational level and are, thus, effectively "insulated" from any kind of dissent.[13]

It is in this precise sense then, confronted as we are by an insulated, authoritarian mode of elite power, that "the question of tactics" comes to the foreground. Weakened by decades of neoliberal attack, the traditional institutions of representative democracy stand before us corrupted and broken. For this reason, say the critics, prospects for a democratic entering of the state must be seen as improbable, if not fantastical, and so the Left is advised instead to adopt a more tactical and perhaps even *performative* posture. That is, to turn to non-traditional sources of Leftist energy, and welcome to the fold all manner of "everyday" expressions of anti-authoritarianism. These expressions can run the gamut, from the more obviously theatrical antics of "The Yes Men,"[14] to those of "black bloc," and other direct-action militant groups, already well-known from their

[10]For a detailed discussion of this point, see Quinn Slobodian, *Globalists: The End of Empire and the Birth of Neoliberalism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018).
[11]Pierre Dardot and Christian Laval, *The New Way of the World: On Neoliberal Society* (New York, NY: Verso, 2017).
[12]Andreas Bieler and Adam Morton, *Global Capitalism, Global War, Global Crisis* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2018), p. 239.
[13]Ibid., 241.
[14]For discussion of 'The Yes Men' collective's interventions, see Tiziana Terranova, "New Economy, Financialization and Social Production in the Web 2.0," in Andrea Fumagalli and Sandro Mezzadra (eds), *Crisis in the Global Economy* (Los Angeles, CA: Semiotext(e), 2010), pp. 166–170.

interventions in the cities of Berkeley and Charlottesville.[15] As Bruff and Tansel express it, the point is less to prescribe an ideal range of tactics, and more that we must learn to take into account a "broader range of resistances," from the struggles of indigenous peoples, to those who seek refuge from gender or citizenship-based discrimination, to those who seek to defend "black lives" from militarized policing.[16]

Critically, say Bieler and Morton, we must not lose hope. Around the world, we can observe on the margins of our globalized and economically-rationalized lives the signs of an emerging network of consensus-based, horizontalist cooperatives, and activist groups which functions, first of all, to prefigure a more democratic future and, secondly, to re-appropriate new public spaces from the clutches of authoritarian austerity. This emerging "multitude and diversity of class struggles," they insist, while it operates experimentally, without "blueprint" or *telos*, is resolved nevertheless in its determination to avoid sub-sumption within the vertically-integrated institutions of the capitalist state.[17] Instead, by inserting themselves in the liminal spaces of everyday peripheral life, these movements seek to bring about a new crystallization in public consciousness – one which will yield, they hope, a "structured agency" sufficient to the task of defeating the regime of global capitalist development.[18]

In keeping with this journal's historic mission, to develop "analyses which reflect a commitment to progressive social change as well as those which are within exploratory phases of development in political science,"[19] the articles in this Special Issue reflect a diverse set of topics and concerns, unified by the idea that political science ought to be a critical practice and should play a part in the struggle for a better world. More specifically, these articles engage with the current political moment and shine a light on fundamental political problems exacerbated by the authoritarian neoliberal turn, as exemplified on a global basis everywhere from Trump's United States to Bolsonaro's Brazil, and from Duterte's Philippines to the forces championing the cause of a right-wing Brexit in the United Kingdom. Unlike other conferences and published research focused specifically on issues to do with defining authoritarian neoliberalism, and charting its genealogy and development in various geographic locations and timeframes, however, the 2019 CNPS conference foregrounded the question of *tactics* in the age of authoritarian neoliberalism.[20] That is, recognizing that our moment might be also an authoritarian one, the conference participants gathered for a conversation about the modes of resistance that might be adequate for our needs. In so doing, they recognized that the question of tactics is one confounded not only by the need to address the paradoxical continuity of global capitalist domination, and not only by the need to be able to incorporate the praxis of a diverse range of militant subjectivities, as they seek emancipation in a world of intersecting racial, ecological, and gender-based injustice, but

[15]See Sarah Jones, "'Antifa Isn't A Hobby Or A Fad': A Q&A With Mark Bray," *The New Republic* (September 2017), available at: https://newrepublic.com/article/144723/antifa-isnt-hobby-fad-qa-mark-bray.
[16]Ian Bruff and Cemal Burak Tansel, "Authoritarian Neoliberalism: Trajectories of Knowledge Production and Praxis," *Globalizations*, p. 242.
[17]Andreas Bieler and Adam Morton, *Global Capitalism, Global War, Global Crisis*, p. 274.
[18]Ibid., 275.
[19]"Aims and Scope," *New Political Science* homepage, available online at: https://www.tandfonline.com/action/journalInformation?show=aimsScope&journalCode=cnps20.
[20]See for example the proceedings of the seventh Annual Conference of the International Initiative for Promoting Political Economy (IIPPE), Lisbon, Portugal, 2016. See also, the special issue "Authoritarian Neoliberalism," in Adam Fabry and Sune Sandback (eds.), *Competition & Change* 23:2 (April 2019).

the fact that all these struggles are taking place against the background of a diminishing space of democratic possibility.

Debating Tactics and Strategy in the Age of Authoritarian Neoliberalism

As the reader will see, however, while this Special Issue of *New Political Science* takes its basic cue from the above-described research, it does so in a self-reflexive and critical manner. For while the pieces gathered here may be unified in terms of their appraisal of the problem that confronts progressive movements, one cannot gainsay that they all inhabit a certain tense relationship with the tactical. Indeed, the reader will find expressed in the pages that follow a worry that movements reliant solely upon tactics are, ultimately, movements preoccupied more by a desire to announce or publicly *perform* their moral righteousness than any kind of desire to fundamentally *transform* the social, political, and economic relationships of our world. But in expressing this concern, the authors are by no means alone. In recent years, and in the wake of Occupy Wall Street especially, such movements have been labeled by their critics as "folk political," and accused of a narcissistic defeatism in the face of their inability to generate transformative victories.[21] Indeed, as Mark Fisher laments, this fetishization of the tactical can be read as a symptom of the colonization of our political imaginations, confining us to modes of struggle which amount to little more than the individualistic expressions of a population so depressed and defeated by neoliberalism that it no longer even knows how to think in terms of collective power.[22] Ultimately, these critics suggest, the intrinsically performative nature of the tactical leaves it vulnerable to meaninglessness, in the absence of a unifying, *strategic* component.

As the guest editors of this Special Issue, we wish to remain agnostic as to which "side" in this debate presents the more persuasive case. Our purpose here is simply to identify this tension within the contemporary Left between those who prioritize the tactical and those who favor the strategic, and to suggest that it constitutes a productive lens through which the reader might wish to read the following articles. Offering an explicit expression of this concern about the pure performativity of contemporary social justice movements, Courtenay W. Daum's article, "Taking a Knee," evaluates the impact of National Football League (NFL) players' protests, including sitting/kneeling during the national anthem. The original intention, she notes, was to instate a radical democratic practice for those excluded from institutionalized political spaces. However, as Colin Kaepernick's 2018 sponsorship deal with Nike would attest, a powerful feature of our late neoliberal moment is the capacity of corporations to engage effectively in what Daum terms the "economization" of politics, ostensibly subsuming the force of his protest *via branding*.

This suspicion of the politics of the purely tactical also emerges in Robert Kirsch's article "You Can't Handicraft the Apocalypse," which poses a key question in response to localist consumeristic challenges to authoritarian neoliberalism. Kirsch examines whether or to what extent such challenges facilitate the creation of networks of solidarity that might yield another possible world, or simply confine our struggle to the concoction of antisocial individualistic schemes. Drawing on Thorstein Veblen, Kirsch evaluates the viability of conspicuous

[21]See Nick Srnicek and Alex Williams, *Inventing the Future* (New York, NY: Verso Books, 2015); and Jodi Dean, "Communicative Capitalism and Class Struggle." *Spheres* 1 (2014), pp. 1–16.
[22]Mark Fisher, *Capitalist Realism* (Ropley, UK: Zero Books, 2009).

consumption as exemplified in the early twentieth century American Handicraft, or Arts and Crafts, Movement as a way of preparing ourselves for an imminent ecological collapse.

Approaching the question of tactics in a somewhat more equivocal manner, contributors Charles E. Umland and James Calder in "Beyond a Spectacular Image of the Working Class" agree that contemporary neoliberal power exceeds that of mere authoritarianism. As with Daum and Kirsch, the paradox of crisis capitalism's continued legitimacy is here grasped less in terms of elite insulation via the state, and more in terms of its ability to channel our resistance into easily recuperated *tactical* expressions. Umland and Calder note equally the recent popularity among anti-Trump liberals of a somewhat incomplete reading of Guy Debord's writings, and other, lesser-known members of the 1968 Paris-based Marxist group, the Situationist International (SI). These liberals, they note, display a problematic tendency of comprehending the SI's famous critique of the society of the spectacle as a critique solely of "the news," and not as a revolutionary manifesto against the "separation" of workers from democratic control of the means of production. Taking this latter central facet of SI thought seriously, Umland and Calder aver, ostensibly counter-spectacular tactics must be accompanied by strategies of revolutionary action. Equally, however, given the historic tendency of sanctioned channels of the "official" Left to strangle such action, the question for the SI shifts to the possibility of spontaneous revolutionary momentum emerging from below, within the population itself. In this sense, the recent *Gilets Jaunes* (or "Yellow Vest") movement in France, serves as an instructive, albeit problematic, example of a true SI-inspired movement.

Exploring what is perhaps an unusual facet on the spectrum of possibilities for tactical action, Mindy Peden's article "Revolutionary Accounting?" argues that even the seemingly neutral practice of accounting can shore up the hegemonic aspirations of neoliberalism. As she suggests in her article, however, it is possible to speak also of repurposed and revolutionary forms of accounting. These can constitute a meaningful contribution to emancipatory strategy on a global level. Looking at cases from Iceland, Ireland, Ecuador, and elsewhere, Peden explores how tactics such as participatory budgeting processes and citizen debt audits can constitute a powerful way of representing the interests and views of marginal subjects. Were this task left solely to elected officials and the bureaucrats of the capitalist state, she contends, these interests and views would surely go ignored.

Staying with this idea of repurposing institutions that might normally appear to work in favor of the interests of the powerful, Brandon W. Kliewer's article "Disentangling Neoliberalism from Leadership Education" demonstrates how leadership learning and development in public higher education might be deployed by a tactically-minded Left. Such practices often seem to affirm neoliberal ideology. Reimagining them as tactics of resistance to neoliberal leadership ideology, however, Kliewer promotes a critical ontology of leadership education that creates conceptual space for dialogue, relationship, and everyday practice.

What strategies of communication might the Left take up, in the face of right-wing assaults on discourse in the public sphere, and the relative popularity of right-wing ideas among the rural poor? One risk is that the Left might make the mistake of many conservative commentators such as J.D. Vance, or even notable liberal figures like Hillary Clinton, and "write off," for example, Appalachian voters as "red necks" or a "basket of deplorables."[23] Chelsea Ebin and Ricky Price's article "The Great American

[23]For discussion, see Elizabeth Catte, *What You Are Getting Wrong About Appalachia* (Cleveland, OH: Belt Publishing, 2018).

Rights Bake Off" rejects this approach as they confront the current assault on LGBT and reproductive rights by authoritarian evangelical conservatives. Ebin and Price offer a radical communicative strategy premised on a strict interpretation of the separation between Church and State, and a coordinative strategy to preserve and expand public accommodation law through the creation of an intersectional coalition.

In a similar manner, Biko Koenig and Lee Scaralia's article, "Populism, Identity Work, and Progressive Organizing in Rural America," employs ethnographic and interview-based research to evaluate the effectiveness of a grassroots movement in rural Pennsylvania that sought to undermine and reinvent the political power structure in a highly conservative and Republican district. As one important way of challenging the kinds of authoritarian-populist energies that can propel a figure such as Donald Trump to office, Koenig and Scaralia argue for an "ideational populism." Inspired by the theories of Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, this framework pits the identity of "the people" against the will of "the elites." Many Americans already display an intuitive grasp of this framework whether conservative or liberal in their political orientation. By appealing to "thin" variations of this basic stance, Left populisms can not only co-exist with conservative versions, while avoiding problematic overlap with them, but they can also mobilize new supporters from previously non-active segments of the population.

Finally, Clyde W. Barrow's article, "Marxist Political Theory, Diversity of Tactics, and the Doctrine of the Long Civil War" offers a novel interpretation of the stakes of the debate over tactics in the age of authoritarian neoliberalism. He argues that the debate on the Left between advocates of legal parliamentary means and armed insurrection collapses in Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels' frequently overlooked articulation of a *strategic* orientation that they termed "revolution in permanence." Applying this framework to the contemporary context, Barrow notes that the rapid expansion and emboldening of parliamentary-oriented Leftist organizations such as the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) demonstrates one necessary pillar for translating the spirit of this strategic orientation, but only insofar as it can be accompanied by an armed proletarian movement. For Barrow, the early signs of an emergence of such a movement in the United States can be seen in groups such as the Redneck Revolt and Socialist Rifle Association. Armed self- defense, the mass strike, and the general strike, among other tactics, often categorized as "illegal," Barrow thus contends, comprise in no small manner the Leftist horizon of our time.

As the articles in this Special Issue all attest, there is a need for a vocabulary and political discourse, and new forms of critical analysis, that can help us understand and possibly transform the current political moment into something better. If the old Thatcherite slogan, "there is no alternative," captured the ideological essence of early neoliberalism, which reigned from the 1970s until the 2008 crisis, today's authoritarian neoliberalism disqualifies and eradicates critique in a more tangible and disciplinary manner, contriving crises in pursuit of permanent states of emergency, and using executive power to wage its assaults upon vulnerable populations. Yet, such tendencies are hardly new. In a way, they bespeak nothing more than the intensification of the tacit authoritarianism that has already long been characteristic of that "normal" Thatcherite version of neoliberalism. And, as the articles that follow will all amply attest, today's version certainly retains the core pillar of the hegemonic ideological apparatus of its older sibling, endlessly repeating its old confessional mantra: "life in free market society equates to genuine freedom so, if you aren't free, it's because you're not working hard enough."

Yet, in the same breath, today's version seems decidedly less bothered about any need even to pretend that its use of the coercive apparatus of the state is justified, at least within any traditional understanding of liberal norms of justice. When it redistributes wealth upward by bailing the rich out for their "too big to fail" mistakes, when it invokes family values to glamorize toxic masculinity, when it invokes free speech in order to "dox" and harm social justice movements, when it disciplines and punishes the poor and people of color in order to institutionalize austerity, and when it subjects immigrant children to endless incarceration in inhumane conditions, the brazenly anti-democratic pedigree of contemporary neoliberalism becomes clear. To the extent that legitimacy is a continued variable in its equation, it is arguably a much more cynical operation than before. For today, in the guise of an anti-establishment political project to make this or that nation "great again," it deploys its skilled iconoclast and demagogue entertainers to solicit the emotional investment of some of its greatest victims in its horrendous admixture of cruelty, violence, and de-democratization.

In various ways, the articles in this Special Issue challenge this nightmare. The assembled pieces are counter-hegemonic insofar as they stimulate discussion and open spaces for social and political transformation by questioning the assumptions, practices, and policies that ground neoliberalism's authoritarian turn. And yet, these assembled articles are also perhaps the starting point of what may become a new conversation for scholars of authoritarian neoliberalism. It is telling, for example, that, toward the end of *Global Capitalism, Global War, Global Crisis*, Bieler and Morton question the need for vertically-integrated struggle. More precisely, they relegate the need for a strategy of entering the capitalist state and wielding its power to the status of an afterthought, "beyond the constraints" of their project.[24] By contrast, a key takeaway from the research presented in this Special Issue is the need to strike a balance between tactics and strategy. Without an explicit self-reflexive dimension, the following articles suggest, tactical movements may tend toward the performative, conflating the articulation in public space of their essentialized subjective experiences, with politics itself.[25] In these framings, because "the problem" is suddenly not neoliberalism at all, but authoritarianism pure and simple, there is a risk that critics of authoritarian neoliberalism might find themselves politically adrift, committed perhaps in their minds to the overthrow of capitalism, yet confusing progress in this vitally important respect with the celebration and endorsement of any and all manner of anti-authoritarian expression.

In one of his greatest moments, Michel Foucault recognized the potential strategic value of the institutions of the Enlightenment, and warned against succumbing to the "blackmail" logic of having to think that our struggle must be somehow for them, or against them.[26] Today, arguably, if any Enlightenment institution can be said to present a potential strategic value for movements seeking to resist neoliberalism, it is that of the state.[27] To be sure, the multitude's capacity for tactical insurgency bequeaths to it a tried and trusted capacity for viral, network-based auto-generation that more

[24]Andreas Bieler and Adam Morton, *Global Capitalism, Global War, Global Crisis*, p. 272.
[25]For more on the risks of essentialized readings of identity for the Left, see Marie Moran, "Identity and Identity Politics," *Historical Materialism* 26:2 (2018), available online at http://www.historicalmaterialism.org/articles/identity-and-identity-politics.
[26]Michel Foucault, "What is Enlightenment?" in Paul Rabinow (ed.), *The Foucault Reader* (New York, NY: Pantheon Books, 1984), pp. 32–50.
[27]Peter Frase, "Beyond the Welfare State," *Jacobin* (December 2014), available online at: http://jacobinmag.com/2014/12/beyond-the-welfare-state/.

traditional Leftist models often lack.[28] Yet, the security of the conditions of possibility for the long-term survival of our movements is also surely a critical consideration.[29] Thus, as difficult a proposition as it may present for those curious about "the question of tactics," the challenge laid down in this Special Issue is to remember that the capture of the institutions of the state must comprise at least a partial element of our strategic horizon.

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[28]Benjamin Arditi, "Post-Hegemony: Politics Outside the Usual Post-Marxist Paradigm," in Alexandros Kioupkiolis and Giorgos Katsambekis (eds), *Radical Democracy and Collective Movements Today* (London, UK: Routledge, 2014), pp. 17–44.
[29]Jodi Dean, "Communicative Capitalism and Class Struggle," pp. 1–16.